

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U. S. Appln. No.: 10/786,422
Attorney Docket No.: Q80122

REMARKS

Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 1-6 are all the claims pending in the application. Claim 1 is amended and new claims 5 and 6 are added. No new matter is presented.

Initially, Applicant notes that the Examiner has not indicated acceptance of the drawings filed April 29, 2004. Also, the Examiner acknowledged the claim to foreign priority, but did not indicate that the certified copy of the priority document was received. Thus, the Examiner is respectfully requested to indicate acceptance of the drawings and receipt of the certified copy of the priority document in the next action.

Claims 1-4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Fukuda (U.S. Patent No. 6,116,939). Applicant traverses this ground of rejection.

Independent claim 1 recites a connector comprising, *inter alia*, an inner housing including a first surface and an outer housing including a second surface. Further, inner housing is at least partially inserted into the outer housing along a first direction. As recited by the claim, the connector additionally includes a fixing member, which fixes the inner housing and the outer housing to each other. In addition, claim 1 defines a convex portion, which protrudes from one of the first surface of the inner housing toward the second surface in the first direction and the second surface of the outer housing toward the first surface in a direction opposed to the first direction. Thus, when the fixing member fixes the inner housing and the outer housing to each other, the convex portion abuts against the other of the first surface of the inner housing and the second surface of the outer housing so that a repulsive force is generated between the inner housing and the outer housing.

In rejecting claim 1, the Examiner relies on Fukuda and analogizes the housing main body 11 of male connector 10 as the inner housing, female connector 20 as the outer housing, and front-end portion 15a of flexible arm 15 as the convex portion. As taught by Fukuda, the male connector is provided with flexible arm 15 on a top surface of male connector 10, such that a securing projection 16 on the top of flexible arm 15 engages a securing portion 25 of female connector 20. (Fukuda at col. 7, lines 22-38). Thus, in the connector of Fukuda, the flexible arm engages a top surface of the female connector, which is not in a direction along which an “inner housing” is at least partially inserted in an “outer housing”, as recited by claim 1.

In contrast, the connector defined by claim 1 requires that the outer housing includes a second surface, wherein said inner housing is at least partially inserted into the outer housing along a first direction. Further, the convex portion protrudes from one of the first surface of the inner housing toward the second surface in the first direction and the second surface of the outer housing toward the first surface in a direction opposed to the first direction.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that the connector defined by claim 1 is neither anticipated nor suggested by Fukuda. Accordingly reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 is requested. Further, Applicant submits that dependent claims 2-4 are allowable at least by virtue of depending from claim 1, and allowance of claims 2-4 is also requested.

For additional coverage merited by the scope of the invention, new claims 5 and 6 are added. For instance, claim 5 recites that the repulsive force between the inner housing and the outer housing is generated in the first direction. Further, claim 6 recites that the first surface is

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parallel to the second surface; and wherein both of the first surface and the second surface are perpendicular to the first direction. Applicant submits that the features recited in claims 5 and 6 are not taught or suggested by the connector lock mechanism of Fukuda. In addition, claims 5 and 6 are allowable at least by virtue of depending from claim 1. Therefore, allowance of claims 5 and 6 is requested.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

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